

POL 0061: Museum Collection

Purpose

To provide a clear and consistent framework for the acquisition, management and development of the Shire of Esperance Museum Collection. The purpose of the Collection is to -

1. Create a sense of place
2. Build a unique historical resource available to the public
3. Conserve heritage for the benefit of the community and future generations
4. Provide a supportive role for education and research for the community

Scope

The aim of the collection is to provide a range of materials reflecting the rich diverse heritage of the region. The collection will include -

1. Physical objects
2. Paper based records
3. Digital based records

The Collection -

1. Will cover a time frame from the earliest recorded information about the area to the present day
2. Should contain both current and retrospective materials in a range of formats
3. Will reflect the diversity of the community including collecting items relating to First Nations and multicultural people

Definitions

Accession: refers to the process of documenting an item for inclusion in a museum collection.

Acquisition: refers to the process of obtaining legal possession of an item for accessioning into a collection. Acquisitions can be by donation, purchase and bequest.

Collection: includes physical objects and archives. Archive material includes items such as photographs, documents, audio files, digital files artworks, published items, community organisation records.

Deaccessioning: refers to the process of removing an item from a museum collection and the recording of the disposal of this item from a collection.

Item: can be a physical object or archive material.

Ownership: refers to an item or collection where a clear legal title, without restrictions or conditions, has been established. The Esperance Museum seeks to obtain clear legal title for all items acquired for its collections.

Provenance: The origin and/or subsequent history of the material can be thoroughly documented and authenticated. Assessment of museum collection material includes documentation of its known chain of ownership.

Significance: refers to the historic, aesthetic, scientific and social values that an item or collection has for past, present and future generations.

Practice

Acquisition Principles

The Museum Collection will acquire material through purchase, copying, donation, gifting or creation.

No conditional donations will be accepted. Materials will only be accepted and included into the collection where it is open for public access after processing.

All materials acquired will become the property of the Shire of Esperance.

All materials will be assessed against the following criteria -

1. Relevance to the region
2. Significance including rarity, aesthetics, social/spiritual. Historic and technical values
3. Establishment of provenance
4. Representation of Collection themes
5. Maintenance, conservation and storage limitations

All materials will be assessed and processed in accordance with the Collection Management Practices.

Deaccessioning

As part of the ongoing collection management, there may be situations where it is necessary to remove materials from the collection. Deaccessioning may be required if -

1. it does not comply with current collection policy
2. It is damaged beyond repair or the conservation costs are beyond the means of the collection budget
3. It is a lesser quality duplicate of another item
4. It lacks any supporting information to enable proper identification to establish relevance to the collection
5. A substantiated request of the return of the item to its original owner/donor is received

Method of Disposal

The methods of disposal in order of desirability are -

1. Return to the donor or donor descendants.
2. Transfer or exchange to another appropriate organisation.
3. Sale with proceeds retained by the Museum.
4. Destroy or recycle.

Loan Principles

From time to time, items from within the Museum Collection may be loaned to other organisations on a temporary basis.

Council may also seek to borrow items from other organisations or individuals.

Items of the Shire of Esperance Museum Collection will not be loaned to individuals.

All loan requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis and approved by the CEO.

Loans will be subject to the Terms and Conditions as set out in the Loan Agreement.

Ethics

The Esperance Museum will only acquire items having a legal and ethical provenance and in accordance with State and Federal law and international agreements between Australia and other countries.

The collection of items will always be conducted in accordance with the standards of the Code of Ethics of Museums Australia Inc. or its subsequent review and National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries.

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Document Information

Responsible Position	Manager Community Support
Risk Rating	Low

Referencing Documents

- *Local Government Act 1995*
- Code of Ethics of Museums Australia Inc.
- National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries

Revision History

Date	Version	CM Reference	Reason for Change	Resolution #	Next Review
Sept 2017	1		New policy	O0917-214	Sept 2019
Apr 2018	2	D17/25901	Biennial review, no change.	O0418-075	Apr 2020
Mar 2020	3		No change, laid on table for further discussion.	O0320-073	Mar 2022
Jun 2020	4	D17/25901[v2]	Minor change reflecting that the Code of Ethics of Museums Australia is currently under review.	O0620-183	Jun 2022
Dec 2021	5	D17/25901[v3]	Biennial review, no change.	O1221-225	Dec 2023
Feb 2024	6	D17/25901[v4]	Update purpose, include scope, rewrite Practice sections to reflect current practice.	O0224-018	Feb 2026
Feb 2026	7	D17/25901[v5]	Biennial review, no change.	O0226-031	Feb 2028